which fail to destroy the beauty of this fine work; and the arguments he brings to bear against the doctrine of evolution are none the less very sensible.

Yet at times one wonders whom he has it in for. Here, in the very first volume, he launches into a violent attack on "noble theories"; a few lines from the introduction to Lacordaire's entomology serve as a spring-board: Darwin, having written a whole book "for the express purpose of proving the identity of principle governing the actions of men and animals," supposedly drew an argument from a story of a sphex that he claims to have discovered devouring a fly, whose wings the sphex had removed in order not to be bothered by the wind. Whereupon Fabre launches out for eight pages, and because, to begin with, sphexes do not eat flies, ridiculing both theory and theorist, Darwinism and Darwin, and piling mockery on mockery.

What! Here we have this scholar whose patience in the observation of nature approaches holiness, who, in this great open book over which he leans piously every day, learns many virtues (among them the danger of self-confidence), who performs the same experiment twenty or thirty times, knowing how pervasive error is and to what fallacious deductions haste invites us —here we have him launching an attack against a sentence reported at second hand and translated! Throughout eight pages he establishes the fact that the supposed *sphex* must have been a *wasp* and is not for a moment concerned to find out whether or not Lacordaire correctly translated the English word! — Well, it so happens that the English text had said "a wasp/* and this ends the quarrel. It so happens even that the Darwin quoted by Lacordaire is not Charles Darwin, but his grandfather, Erasmus Darwin! Moreover, Fabre recognizes these things in the second volume with the noblest courtesy and the most natural frankness, while asking to be forgiven

for his mistake. If I point it out here, it is not only to draw from it a warning against passionate judgments but also, and especially, a fine example of repentance.

Charles Darwin himself wrote of Erasmus Darwin: "I greatly admired at that time" (when he was a student) "my grandfather's *Zoonomia,* but on rereading it a second time after ten or fifteen years' interval I was disappointed: *the disproportion between hypotheses and facts was too great" (Recollections Concerning the Development of My Mind and Character)* .[17] Francis Darwin writes, in the biography of his father: "Charles Darwin possessed to the highest degree that lively imagination that he notes in Erasmus as being deeply characteristic and which gave him *that pervasive tendency to build up theories and generalizations."* "That tendency," adds the son, who is doubtless aware of

[17] And of his father, Robert Waring [Darwin], Charles said: *For every fact that presented itself he had a theory/* [A.]